

The Poss-Ailities Are Endless



RECREATION THERAPY



www.brooklinerec.com

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What is Recreation Therapy?

Definition – Recreation Therapy is a form of therapy that uses leisure modalities and the things you like to do to increase functional independence, reduce barriers related to recreation, and improve the overall quality of life for individuals living with disabilities. “Recreation Therapy means, a treatment service designed to restore, remediate, and rehabilitate, a person’s level of functioning and independence in life activities, to promote health and wellness as well as reduce or eliminate the activity limitations and restrictions to participation in life situations caused by an illness or disabling condition.” – American Therapeutic Recreation Association (ATRA).

Why is Recreation Therapy so Important?

Research supports the concept that people with active, satisfying lifestyles will be happier and healthier. Recreation Therapy provides services, and treatment which are based on the individuals’ interests and lifestyle. This allows them to better engage in therapy and apply these functional improvements in all areas of their life. For individuals who have functional deficits and a need for therapy, Recreation Therapy services which integrate the client’s lifestyles and natural environments are often the most clinically appropriate manner to achieve meaningful outcomes. Recreation Therapy allows for better generalization to enhance individuals’ functional orientation to treatment. Put simply, Recreation Therapy works to improve individuals’ functioning and keep them as active, healthy and independent as possible in their chosen life pursuits.

Volunteer with Recreation Therapy!

There are a number of volunteer opportunities throughout the year in the Recreation Therapy Division. Volunteers are needed in every aspect of programming from one on one aides, to coaches for Special Olympics. Volunteering is a great way to earn community service hours, meet great people, have fun, and gain valuable life experiences. If you are interested in Volunteering or have more questions regarding donating your time and talents please contact Brandon Fitts, CTRS.

Looking for ways to support us?

If you would like to make a Donation to The Recreation Therapy Division please contact the Recreation Department. All donations directly benefit program participants and are greatly appreciated!

Donations to Special Olympics
The Recreation Therapy Division is home to 5 Special Olympic sports that occur throughout the year as well as other related events for around 100 Athletes in Brookline. The Brookline Special Olympics Chapter is almost completely financed through fundraisers and donations. 100% of your donation will go directly to programs that service the athletes of Brookline.

Advocacy:

The Recreation Therapy Division serves as a modality for advocacy for individuals living with disabilities in and around Brookline. If you have any questions related to inclusive resources, public policies, or any other question related to a disability and local resources please contact the Recreation Therapy Division.

Mission:

The mission of the Recreation Therapy Division of the Brookline Recreation Department is to provide effective, Therapeutic-based programs for youth through adult populations who have disabling conditions and/or illnesses in an effort to promote positive growth, development, and independence. This is accomplished through the provision of recreation services in a safe, structured, and prosperous environment via the Brookline Recreation Department.



Recreation Therapy in Brookline

The Recreation Therapy Division provides a diverse range of programs for individuals living with and without disabilities in Brookline and its surrounding areas. Programs range from social based activities such as teen outings, specialty acitivites, and sports programs to more Therapeutic-based groups such as Swim Classes, Social Activities, and Dinner Groups. Programs vary from Season to Season and the best way to stayed informed on the latest Recreation Therapy Program offerings is to go to **www.brooklinerec.com** and search under “**Rec Therapy**”.



Recreation Therapy Programs:

The Recreation Therapy Division offers adaptive year round programming for individuals of all ages who have disabilities. Recreation Therapy in Brookline is connected to a large network of professionals which enables the program facilitators to offer the highest quality service delivery possible.

Examples of Recreation Therapy Programs Offered

- Golf Clinics** - Instructional activities for youth and adults
- Zumba** - An upbeat, dance workout set at a slower pace.
- Early Childhood Activities** - Pool and Gym activities for Preschoolers
- Special Olympic Sports** (See Below)
- Winter related Activities:** XC Skiing, Snowshoeing, Adaptive Downhill Skiing and Family Skate
- Teen Trips** - Community Outings every other Friday night
- Adult Groups** - 21+ Dinner group designed for community integration to promote independence
- Aquatics** - Group lessons for Youth
- Dances and Events** - Social Events that are a great time for everyone
- Internships** - High School employment program designed to transition teens into the workforce

No matter what the age or disability, we have something for you!
If you are a parent of a preschooler, we have play groups designed to improve gross motor functioning.
If your child is in middle school we have summer camp and specialty programs such as golf and zumba.
If you are a teenager we have friday night trips and teen employment programs.
If you are an adult we have dinner groups and sport offerings.

Special Olympics (SOMA):

Brookline Recreation Therapy offers 5-7 Official Special Olympics Sports throughout the year. Examples of these programs are:

- Winter: **Basketball**
- Spring: **Aquatics**
- Track & Field**
- Summer: **Softball**
- Fall: **Flag Football**

All Special Olympic Programs are free for individuals! Pre-registration is required by all participants prior to the start of the sport. A Special Olympics season is structured around two tournaments and a practice schedule. Brookline is an official chapter of Special Olympics of MA and works closely with SOMA to provide the highest quality program for all athletes. “Let me win, but if I can not win, let me be brave in the attempt” (The Special Olympics Athlete’s Oath).

You must be 6 years old to train and 8 years old to compete.



Accommodation Requests and Accessibility:

Inclusion is an integral part of the Brookline Recreation Department. Any person can request to complete a form for Inclusion at any point. The form is a small document that surveys a participant’s ability across multiple domains. If you are new to Recreation Therapy or would like us to know a bit more about you or your child, this is a great place to start so we can better adapt our programs! Please note that this is not an official Recreation Therapy Assessment. This form is intended to better inform the division of a participant’s specific needs. Official Recreation Therapy Assessments may be requested and asked for by the individual or family of a participant.

All Brookline Recreation Facilities are accessible. In addition to accessible facility structures we have the following services available to program participants.

- Accessible van with wheelchair lift
- Pool lifts at the Evelyn Kirrane Aquatics Center
- Skate sled and skate aides at the Jack Kirrane Skating Rink



What do Recreation Therapists Do?

Recreation Therapists assist clients in developing skills, knowledge and behaviors for daily living and community involvement. The Therapist works with the client and their family to incorporate specific interests and community resources into therapy to achieve optimal outcomes that transfer to their real life environment. The goal of Recreation Therapy is to restore, remediate or rehabilitate in order to improve functioning and independence as well as reduce or eliminate the effects of illness or disability.

Education and Credentials

A qualified Recreation Therapist is one who is nationally certified as a Certified Therapeutic Recreation Specialist (CTRS), usually referred to as Recreation Therapists. Qualified professionals are certified through the National Council for Therapeutic Recreation Certification (NCTRC). Academic programs in Therapeutic Recreation or Recreation Therapy emphasize course work in the physical, biological, and behavioral sciences and recreation and leisure theory. They also require an internship under the supervision of a CTRS.

Parent Testimonial:

"First, I must say the program is wonderful and has exceeded our expectations. My son graduated from The Riverview School last year and moved without us to Brookline to transition into the Adult World. He already had a job so he would be productive during the weekdays but it was very important to try to replicate the social life he was used to at Riverview. Being new to the area I chose to call the Brookline Recreation Department and was referred to the Recreation Therapy Division. Be it known, the new CTRS had just started yet he had many suggestions for my son. We decided to try one of his suggestions, the Brookline Special Olympics program. We signed up for Basketball and my son loved it right away. The Coaches, staff, and volunteers as well as the participants and their families were all wonderful. At the end of the season, we were unable to join my son at his first State tournament because we were celebrating our oldest son's 26th birthday in DC where he lives. That night, my son called to report how his day went and he was bursting with excitement. He said, "this is the best day of my life!" and since then he has signed up for a sport each session and has loved them all. He has made a lot of friends and has enjoyed every minute of it. Brookline Recreation Therapy has enabled Zack to transition into his new Community with ease. We are so grateful for this opportunity, thank you to all!"

Participant Testimonial:

"Today I went Hiking! It was me, and 4 of my friends. We took the bus to the woods (Lost Pond) in Brookline. We got off the bus and started to hike. It was a long Hike. I felt tired walking so much, but had a great time. I felt happy to be with my friends. At the end of the hike we had to walk back through the golf course to get to the bus. The best part of our adventure was when we got back. I got to swim at the Brookline Recreation Pool! It was fabulous. I really enjoyed my friends today."

